

RHEUMATISM

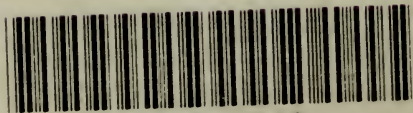
AND ITS TREATMENT

BY THE USE OF THE

PERCUSSO-PUNCTATOR

J. BRINDLEY JAMES.

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RHEUMATISM

AND ITS TREATMENT BY THE USE OF THE

PERCUSSO-

PUNCTATOR



BY

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SECOND EDITION.

LONDON

THE REBMAN PUBLISHING CO., LTD.,
11, ADAM STREET, STRAND.

1897.

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LONDON	
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P R E F A C E .

AT the solicitation of numerous professional friends I have consented, at the risk of appearing somewhat egotistical, to re-publish in a Second Edition a small treatise, itself a development of a paper I read at an Annual Meeting of the British Medical Association, held at Cardiff some ten years ago, on the treatment of Sciatica, Lumbago, Rheumatism, etc., by the instrument of my own invention—the Percusso-punctator. While I scarce have anything new to tell my friends on this exclusive point, I presume this very fact may in itself be deemed a further testimony to my invention's unchallenged efficacy; and certainly my own uninterrupted experience thereof throughout so many years renders me more satisfied than ever with it. But while bringing forth this Second Edition I have been further stimulated thereto by the desire of friendly critics that I should add to my revised *opusculum* a brief notice of another line of treatment by injection of sulphuric æther, from which most satisfactory results have been obtained, and also some hints on the all-important subject of *diet*, too often relegated in the background, or passed over somewhat superciliously by the therapist.

To these I have also appended a Chapter on the prevalent nervous disorders of the day, while disclaiming any lofty pretensions to be the *Ductor dubitantium* on a subject of such complex gravity. At the same time this latter addition to my original work is in no way digressive, since, on the contrary, this question's therapeutic aspect suggests a wide field for the judiciously discriminatory use of the Percusso-punctator.

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CHAPTER I.

MECHANISM OF THE PERCUSSO-PUNCTATOR.

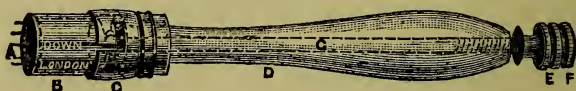
A DECADE has now elapsed since I had the pleasure of reading before the British Medical Association, at one of its Annual Meetings, a paper on the Percusso-punctator, then the still youthful child of my invention, now, accordingly, a decade older and proportionately stronger in practical experience.

The visitor to one of the vast military museums of Paris, Berlin, or Vienna is struck with the immense number of "wicked gins" devised at various periods, which either have been rapidly superseded by some more handy arm, some more efficient engine, or else abandoned altogether; possibly never adopted at all in practical use, as of less than questionable service. Such, likewise, proves the case in surgery's more beneficently-designed armoury, the antiquity of which is scarcely more remote than that of war. From the days of ancient Egypt—probably its early cradle—instrument after instrument, improvement after improvement, have followed in successive effacement of each other's memory for generations past. I venture to assume that the fact of my not having found occasion to modify to any perceptible extent my original invention speaks favourably for its conception, while admitting that its very simplicity affords little scope even for fanciful variation. It was, in fact, devised for carrying out a most simple method of treatment. As in many practical arts, so in medicine and surgery, the simplest methods often afford a solution to the most complex questions.

And truly the Protean variety of shape wherein lumbago, sciatica, and rheumatism may, and do, assail suffering humanity, teems with almost despairingly complex

difficulties in the way of treatment, whether curative or simply palliative, in their distressful, obstinate persistency. Rome conquered the Gauls and Teutons with a sword 18 inches long. I have found all these morbid distresses yield to the simplest of instruments: puncture of the skin with needles over the seat of lesion.

The mechanism I ever employed for the purpose is neither complicated nor cumbersome; in fact I carry it in my waistcoat pocket. The adjoining rough diagram is



completely descriptive of its construction. A small metal connecting-rod, G, which in certain cases also serves to facilitate the passage of an electric current if requisite, runs through an ivory handle, D, which constitutes the body of the instrument. It also serves to protrude or withdraw *ad libitum* certain puncturing needles, A, through a perforated metal cap, B. A cylinder, C, itself electroplated like this cap, connects the latter with the ivory body-handle, D, by a lock-contrivance similar to that of the military plain bayonet now discarded by regular infantry, but which still may be seen used by some volunteer corps. At the further end of said handle is a screw, E, which regulates the protrusion and retraction of the needles as desired by the operator. And finally the instrument terminates in a second screw, F, designed to effect connection with an electric battery, where a current from the latter may be deemed an advisable curative expedient.

It will thus be readily seen that I studiously have avoided complexity of design, having ever upheld the axiom: the simpler your mechanism the greater results do you obtain thereby.

For years I had, before designing the above, obtained

most satisfactory results from acupuncture effected by means of one simple solitary needle. But the obvious desirability of multiplying the immediate application while also curtailing the operator's expenditure of time, and the annoying tedium entailed on the patient, induced me to seek for some mechanical method of effecting the same, and also of thereby propagating to a very wide extent its application. The intense cause for satisfaction I found in the results of my course of treatment by acupuncture has ever led me to advocate the adoption of this simple expedient by all my brother practitioners.

CHAPTER II.

PRACTICAL USE OF THE PERCUSSO-PUNCTATOR.

WHEN, some years back, I was attending a South London District Meeting of the Metropolitan Branch of the British Medical Association, I was extremely gratified at hearing my own views on the efficacy of acupuncture very warmly advocated by no less an authority than Mr. Macnamara, since then the revered President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. Amid several highly satisfactory examples culled from his own extensive and distinguished practice, Mr. Macnamara, speaking on this head, instanced the case of a gentleman who had consulted him respecting acute, intolerable suffering entailed by a painful lesion of the deltoid muscle, which rendered every action of the upper limb a source of exquisite pain. In this case resort to simple acupuncture worked wonders, speedily enabling the patient to perform most varied motions of the affected muscle, from which prior to such application he had been absolutely debarred by suffering now happily removed. I have since then heard from Mr. Macnamara himself that he has regularly adopted in his own private practice the use of my Percusso-punctator, and has successively worn out two of them.

In addition to endorsement by such eminent approval, I had at this period become further convinced as to the practical utility of acupuncture by scores of cases to the point occurring within the scope of my own practice, not restricted to any one special type of affection alone, but embracing a pretty wide variety. Out of forty most satisfactory cases cured by this simple procedure, which I specially selected to further cull from thence typical ex-

amples for the paper which I read originally on this subject before the British Medical Association at its Annual Meeting (held at Cardiff that year), neuralgia of the fifth nerve, hemicrania, brow-ague, vertigo, lumbago, pleurodynia, and stiff-neck, each severally figured; as also did miscellaneous pains of rheumatoid or of nervine character, either singly or combining both such characteristics.

As for the number of patients suffering from simple rheumatism whom I have successfully relieved by dint of acupuncture pure and simple, from one of the most frequently occurring, and at the same time most stubbornly persistent forms of human suffering which daily crosses the path of the medical practitioner, their name is Legion . . . they offer quite an *embarras de richesses* in the way of instances to quote. I shall, however, attempt further on to effect some selection from amid the mass, albeit such a process somewhat resembles the painful one of selecting out of 150 equally meritorious candidates for *two* vacant situations.

But already, in the year 1883, the successful results I had thus obtained had impelled me to invite publicity for this same system of treatment. But I feel quite confident of satisfying my readers that such success by no means lured me into the originator's proverbial error of riding to death the hobby-horse of his own rearing, breeding, and grooming, while I mention that in this same year, 1883, I advocated, in the columns of the *British Medical Journal*, another method of treatment—that by injection, to which I shall incidentally allude farther on. Meanwhile I beg to submit to the reader's perusal several instances connected with, and practically illustrating my experiences of acupuncture.

CHAPTER III.

INSTANCES OF ACUPUNCTURAL TREATMENT.

A MAN, aged 51, consulted me respecting certain injuries entailed on his left shoulder and elbow by a very sudden and violent fall while alighting from a vehicle. His foot in the course of this action had got entangled in the reins, thereby causing him to fall with all the impetus of his own bodily weight thrown upon the left upper limbs. On inspection, no trace of dislocation or fracture could be discovered; but the skin was slightly abraded, and the forearm severely bruised up to the elbow, indeed the ecchymosis extended upwards a little above this point. Over the deltoid muscle there was very acute pain, aggravated and attended by immobility of the shoulders when the arm was moved passively, together with pain in the forearm to a lesser degree. Having applied zinc ointment over the abrasion, I used the Percusso-punctator freely, and with the satisfactory result of restoring motion to the limb with scarcely any pain. Three days later on, as this same satisfactory progress maintained itself uninterrupted, I employed the same treatment in applications to the *brow*, the nervous shock attending the accident itself having entailed on the sufferer no little pain in that region. To this accidental corollary his arm no doubt was also partially indebted for its absolute immobility in the first instance, unable as he had been to move it at all. This frontal pain, moreover, I was no less successful in dissipating by means of this subsidiary process than I had already been over a more extended area. So rapidly indeed did all pain eventually leave the patient, I really

think it would have been difficult to quote a more satisfactory instance.

In another case—that of a man turned sixty years of age—no mechanical origin was ascribable to pain fully as distressing in his case as in that I have just described. . . . Here, though, this intolerable pain was entirely located between the shoulders, and was deeply aggravated, either by the act of stooping or by that of straightening the frame. I applied the Percusso-punctator over the seat of pain and stiffness on either side of the spine, with a result no less gratifying than in the case previously quoted. . . . This enabled the patient to straighten himself or stoop down *ad libitum* with perfect ease and immunity from pain.

A third case was characterised by acute rheumatic pains in both arms, which for three months had no less intensely than unremittingly tormented the patient, a man aged forty-nine, of active, energetic habits, and whose life such prostration and total disability consequently tended all the more aggravatingly to render a perfect burden to him. In this, as in the two preceding cases, application of the Percusso-punctator worked triumphantly. It chased away all pain from both arms, completely restoring to either limb its normal freedom of action and motion. This man for three months had been totally unable to button his own coat up; he now was soon enabled to do so readily without the faintest hindrance or sense of pain.

Let me add, in commentary, not only on these three specially quoted examples, but also on many others which time and space alike preclude me from adducing, that the relief thus afforded my patients by the use of my Percusso-punctator was *immediate*. All know the truth of the old adage, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Often do we encounter a valetudinarian deploring the

lapse of time and patience wasted over some widely-lauded system of treatment, electric, hydropathic, or otherwise, all seemingly destined to culminate in the lugubrious distich once so popular with the sepulchral stone-cutter, "Physicians were in vain." In four out of five cases, it is true, our grumbling valetudinarian may prove after all but a "*malade imaginaire*," whose sole complaint is a plethora of moneyed leisure to waste on fostering fantastic woes, physical and mental. . . . In strict justice to my three patients above quoted, as also to many more—no less so to myself—I should have detected the "*malade imaginaire*" long before recording a single note of his fallacious case. . . . Let me also mention that one of these patients was a member of the Stock Exchange, to whom inability to hold a pen or proceed bodily to business was almost a matter of life and death in a calling where a fortune perhaps may depend on half an hour's celerity or procrastination. To these three professional "samplers" I cannot refrain from adding a fourth case bearing entirely on that intolerable physical torment *sciatica*, an early experience in my adoption of acupunctural treatment, which really merits preservation from oblivion in common with so many others of kindred interest. Here was a man afflicted with *sciatica* to an extent so excruciating, that his projected visit to my consulting-room had to be postponed several days running on account of the positive torture each movement of his limbs inexorably inflicted upon him. I was accordingly summoned to his bedside; and on arriving there, I found indeed a man in a most pitiable condition of physical suffering [with corresponding mental depression. The application of my needle acted upon him like a sorcerer's charm. . . . That *very same* evening, *he*, in his turn, *walked* a goodly distance to my surgery! . . . Close akin to this successful result was another I obtained within that very

same week in a case of *rheumatism*. . . . In *this* further instance elevation of the right arm had morbidly become a downright impossibility to the patient. This function was rapidly restored him by acupuncture.

I have alluded above to "*malades imaginaires*." I may add in connection with the latter that the utility of the Percusso-punctator extends itself also to the speedy detection of malingerers; whether in the gaol, the barrack-room, on board ship, or in the wayward hysterical damsel's *boudoir*.

CHAPTER IV.

APPLICABILITY OF ACUPUNCTURE TO VARIOUS AFFECTIONS.

IN selecting these cases for publicity, I have been solely guided by the happy illustration they so typically furnish of my therapeutic system. But with a view to also exemplify its advisable applicability to very varied forms of suffering, I now subjoin a brief enumeration of *forty* salient cases, culled from amid a vast number of my private patients within an interval of two months, and separately classified. I am happy to add that in each case signal relief proved permanent. I enumerate each division in its general order of frequency within my practice.

Lumbago.

1. Mr. R. suffered from excruciating pain of most obstinate character, from which, however, he was completely freed by acupuncture applied through the medium of the Percusso-punctator to the lumbar region, 4th November, 1885. Six weeks have now elapsed, and he has continued exempt from any recurrence of this painful affection.

2. Mr. H. When I was summoned to him on the 10th of November, 1885, he was unable to stand upright, or straighten his back, from the same distressing cause. Pain *entirely removed* by acupuncture applied in the same manner.

3. Mr. A., on the 24th November, 1885, was still suffering intensely from lumbago. Completely cured by application of the Percusso-punctator.

4. Mr. H. Completely cured by the same application, 25th November, 1885.

5. Mr. R. D. Lumbago, cured in like manner, 27th November, 1885.

6. Mr. O. S. Lumbar pains *entirely removed* by the same process, 1st December, 1885.

7. Mr. H. An inveterate case of lumbago, *very* much relieved by acupuncture, though not yet entirely removed, 27th December, 1885.

8. Mr. L. Lumbago *completely* removed by acupuncture, 27th December, 1885.

9. Mr. O., a very obstinate case of lumbar pain, was treated by acupuncture in the early days of November; has enjoyed intense relief ever since. Acupuncture first applied 9th November, 1885.

10. Mr. A. also suffered cruelly up to the 17th of November, 1885, from intense pain over the lumbar muscles. Much relieved since the first application of the Percusso-punctator to him on that date.

Vertigo.

11. Mr. J. S. has suffered from attacks of giddiness for many years, the same very much alleviated now by the application of acupuncture on the 6th November, 1885, over the back of the neck and the temples.

12. Mr. H. Much relieved from the same distressing recurrences since application of acupuncture on 17th November, 1885.

13. Mr. G. Vertigo, much relieved by acupuncture at the back of the neck, 17th November, 1885.

14. Mr. S. A very long standing case of vertigo, *completely cured* by acupuncture, applied to back of the neck as in the preceding case, 19th November, 1885.

15. Mr. H. Vertigo accompanied by excruciating neuralgic pains, all of which have been *entirely removed* by acupuncture at the back of the neck and over the left temple, 19th November, 1885.

16. Mr. H. B., 25th November, 1885, was suffering

intensely from vertigo, which was immediately relieved by acupuncture applied at the back of the neck and over the forehead.

17. Miss C. H. Vertigo *cured* by acupuncture on 27th November, 1885.

18. Mr. A. L. Vertigo *cured* also by the same process on the 30th November, 1885.

19. Mrs. S. R. Vertigo of long standing, likewise *entirely* removed by the same application, 1st December, 1885.

Hemicrania.

20. Mrs. B. Intense hemicrania *removed completely* by acupuncture over the forehead and the back of the head, 4th November, 1885.

21. Mrs. A. Great relief from the same description of pain obtained by acupuncture, 10th December, 1885.

22. Mr. B. Completely freed from hemicrania by acupuncture over the temples and back of the neck, 28th November, 1885.

Brow-Ague.

23. Mr. B. suffered intensely from this rarer but acutely distressful form of cephalic neuralgia, from which, however, application of the Percusso-punctator *completely freed* him, 7th December, 1885.

24. Mrs. A. Intense brow-ague of long standing, with pain on the top of the head. Very great relief afforded ever since acupuncture was applied, 10th November, 1885.

Dental Neuralgia.

25. The Rev. D. J., disabled for some time from the fulfilment of his sacred duties by most excruciating dental neuralgia, was treated for the same by acupuncture on Saturday, 14th November, 1885, enabled thereby to conduct and preach at *two* Sunday services on the

morrow, with happy relief from pain, soon afterwards completely cured.

26. Miss L. suffered considerably from this obstinate and painful affection, but was *completely* cured of it by the application of the Percusso-punctator on the 23rd November, 1885, an electric current being transmitted through the same.

27. Mr. E. Dental neuralgia, *cured* by simple acupuncture with the Percusso-punctator, same date.

28. Mr. J. P. experienced intense relief, by means of simple acupuncture, from the same affection, 30th November, 1885.

29. Mr. R. K. completely freed from dental neuralgia by the same process, 7th December, 1885.

Sciatica.

30. Mrs. L. *completely cured* of sciatica by acupuncture, also on 7th December, 1885.

31. Mr. H. Sciatica *completely* removed by application of the Percusso-punctator over the seat of pain, on the 27th November, 1885.

32. Mr. H. H. Sciatica of long standing *cured* by the same process, 28th November, 1885.

Neuralgia of the Fifth Nerve.

33. Mr. W., for three weeks previously suffering from this stubbornly painful form of neuralgia, experienced unspeakable relief from application of acupuncture, 1st December, 1885.

Stiff Neck.

34. Miss G. was suffering cruelly from this affection up to the 19th November, 1885, when she was happily *cured* thereof by means of the Percusso-punctator.

35. Mr. B., cured of the same affection by the same means. In this case, a current of electricity was further resorted to, 20th November, 1885.

Miscellaneous Cases.

36. Mr. W. experienced considerable relief by means of acupuncture from very persistent *pain in the jaw*, its upper articulation especially, 9th November, 1885.

37. Mr. S. was *completely freed*, by the same process, from intense *pain over the left breast* whenever he moved his arm, 10th November, 1895.

38. Mr. F. M. was likewise freed from long-standing *pain* of a *neuralgic* character extending over the *hepatic region*, 7th December, 1885.

Pleurodynia.

39. Mr. H., who suffered from pleurodynia's most severely developed characteristics, experienced *complete removal* of great pain induced thereby, on application of acupuncture, 4th November, 1885.

To these miscellaneous cases I may add an experience related to me by a professional friend. This gentleman's wife had the misfortune to incur and undergo a term of imprisonment for a mere technical offence held to be contempt of court. This poor lady, who was in excellent health at the time she incurred a penalty so galling to a woman of refinement and sensibility, suffered acutely, after her release from prison, from persistent insomnia and most distressing nervous hyper-sensitiveness, obviously due to the combined mental worry, physical discomfort, and humiliation entailed by her punishment. Happily her no less distressed husband bethought himself of *acupuncture*, to the speedy and complete restoration of her health and habitually cheerful, lively disposition.

It is, however, only in strict accordance with this sublunary world's order of things, that the discoverer and inventor, from Galileo with his telescope to Stephenson with his locomotive, should at first—often a terribly prolonged “at first”—resign themselves to encounter, not active persecution in our times, but at all

events hostile opposition, scepticism, and contemptuous derision. . . . Perhaps it is all for the best in the long run, harshly though it may bear on individuals, and apostles are bound to be persecuted. . . . Where such discovery or invention is genuine and well-founded it will finally *live down* such opposition by its own passively practical self-assertion. For a long time my respected colleague, Dr. Lambert, of Birkenhead, conscientiously held my above-expressed views on acupunctural treatment to be unfounded and untenable. So, acting on the assumption that "seeing is believing," I solicited of that gentleman the favour of an opportunity for me to test my method in his presence, and which he afforded me with the readiest courtesy. Here was a typical case of lumbago, and a very disheartening case withal. The unhappy patient's life was rendered unbearable to him by the excruciating pain attending his every motion, and thereby condemning him to a deplorable state of passive, helpless suffering. In Dr. Lambert's presence I sedulously brought my Percusso-punctator to bear on the patient's lumbar regions. . . . The result was truly magical. . . . After a very short while, but an uninterrupted application of the instrument, the sufferer not only recovered very enduring facility of motion, but moral confidence as well. After a little encouraging persuasion, this poor man, whom stubbornly persistent suffering had reduced to a quite marasmatic, apathetic lack of hope for the future, actually got out of bed, put on, then laced his boots deliberately. . . . I need scarcely add that I then and there gained in Dr. Lambert a complete convert to my theory and my *modus operandi*.

I feel myself warranted, after these quotations, to invite each of my brother practitioners honouring these lines with his attention, to procure a Percusso-punctator and essay it on his own rheumatic or sciatic patients.

CHAPTER V.

TREATMENT OF SCIATICA AND LUMBAGO BY THE INJECTION OF SULPHURIC ÆTHER.

IN the opening pages of this *opusculum* I have incidentally alluded to another method I have often adopted in cases of sciatica and lumbago, apart from this special type of treatment by acupuncture, to the exposition of which these retrospective memoranda are mainly dedicated. As, however, I am giving them renewed publicity solely for the benefit of my professional brethren and their patients, I feel confident they will read with interest a few experiences in connection with this therapeutic alternative.

In the year 1883, I warmly advocated in the columns of the *British Medical Journal* the injection of sulphuric æther in the treatment of lumbago and of sciatica, from which I had repeatedly obtained the most satisfactory results. To these, my last four years' practical experiences have induced me to add the name of rheumatism as combated with no less brilliant success by this *modus operandi*, which I may describe now hastily enough, simple as it is.

After preliminary dry-cupping over the seat of lesion, I inject with a subcutaneous syringe daily *ten* minims of sulphuric æther. If in the course of a week I find no marked progress, I gradually increase this injection-dose up to a *maximum* of *thirty* minims. Concurrently with this external treatment I have ever found it advisable to administer internally, 1, at the outset, a brisk purgative; 2, a mixture containing *five* grains of *salicylate of soda* in *one ounce* of *infusion of gentian*, with *ten* minims of *chloric æther* and another *ten* minims of *tincture of ginger*, every

four hours. . . . In *not one* solitary case have I found this system prove a curative failure. Usually, in about a week's time my rheumatic patients have found themselves cured. In cases of lumbago and sciatica, I have found it work more expeditious wonders still. . . .

As every experienced practitioner well knows, there are no two cases ever precisely analogous *in toto*, any more than two minutely identical skeletons have ever been discovered by anatomists; and often one special feature of treatment will act far more vividly in one case than in another. I have seen sufferers from lumbago come to me nearly bent double with downright torture in the lumbar region, only to walk away again erect and jubilant at their liberation from their distress, after dry-cupping. Sciatic patients have limped into my consulting-room groaning aloud, to step out of it again briskly, free from any further suffering after the subcutaneous injection above described. Let me especially instance one particular case. This patient was an old man who came to me with the somewhat disheartening self report of having devoted all the nine preceding years to going the round of all the London Hospitals, in utterly futile quest of relief from cruelly persistent sciatica. In short, he declared the whole medical profession apparently united in tendering him the identical advice given in Dickens' "Little Dorrit" by the good-natured circumlocution-office functionary to a perplexed postulant, "really not to bother himself about it any further." . . . In point of fact, here was indeed a living instance of the old tomb-stone adage already quoted, "Physicians were in vain!" . . .

This was by no means encouraging; but while there's life there's hope, in which more sanguine view my new consultant sensibly concurred with me. When, therefore, I asked whether he were willing I should essay upon him a method of treatment never yet attempted, but which

had nothing dangerous or excruciating about it, he very readily assented. Accordingly, I forthwith commenced this method of subcutaneous injection above described and pursued it by gradations until I had attained the daily injection of a *drachm* of sulphuric æther. Marked improvement steadily followed this course; nevertheless, I was compelled to suspend it for a while, in consequence of a hard cicatrix most provokingly developing itself over the seat of the sciatic nerve. But so soon as this abnormal formation had been removed, I resumed my injectional system, with the fortunate result of the patient, to his infinite glee, soon finding himself free at last from his sciatica of nine years' thralldom. . . . *Fifteen years* have now lapsed since he thus came to me as a last forlorn hope; during which interval, despite the advance of years, he has sustained *only one* recurrence of sciatica, and that of a very slight character, speedily dispelled. At the present time this patient, I am happy to add, is enjoying a hale old age in absolute freedom from sciatica. I think it would prove truly impossible to instance a more satisfactory case.

CHAPTER VI.

ON DIET IN RHEUMATISM.

MOLIÈRE—that witty, but bitter dramatic satirist of the medical profession—makes one of the characters in his immortal comedy, “Le Malade Imaginaire,” assert in criticism of the physicians of his day a very sweeping charge, that they could diagnose to perfection every conceivable variety of disease; describe, differentiate, and classify the origin of every complaint to which poor weak humanity was liable, its *modus operandi*, etc., etc., etc.; that they were undoubtedly brimful of pathological lore; that moreover they were a strictly honourable, conscientious body of learned gentlemen, profound believers in their own theories, therapeutic no less than pathological; that they consequently never prescribed to their patients a single remedy, gentle or violent, which they were not ready and willing to fully essay on themselves if similarly afflicted in their own case, *but . . .* (a sadly pessimistic *but*) . . . they could *not cure* any disease whatsoever, had never yet done so, and never could or would, *in secula seculorum*. . . .

It is scarce needful to critically recall *per contra*, in vindication of the physicians of an age reckoning as they did such names as *Hodges, Conyers, Sydenham, Boerhaaven*, and *Guéneau* on their muster-roll, that witty Monsieur de Molière, like our Shakespeare, was no less a courtier than a dramatist, writing and personally performing in his own plays for the personal amusement of a great Sovereign and subservient Court. . . . Even as our Bard of Avon made a warlike hero of the *un-warlike* Henry the Seventh to gratify the latter’s Royal granddaughter and successor, so the French Aristophanes found it “pay” to heap

ridicule on medical men before the Court of Louis the Great. . . . The ruthless "Revocation" of the Edict of Nantes, and its resulting frightful persecution of the Huguenots, were looming in the distance. . . . Excluded as the French Reformers had gradually become from holding any office under the Crown, from the Bench and the Bar, &c., *Medicine* was the only liberal profession left open to a French Protestant gentleman (even this was closed to the Huguenots after 1685) . . . The same was much the case with the Jansenists, who, albeit sincere Catholics themselves, were also viewed at Court and by high Church dignitaries as heretics almost as bad as the Huguenots, and were consequently themselves subjected later on to persecution at the hands of their brother Catholics, though not to such frightfully murderous extent as were the unhappy Huguenots. It is doubtless from this period, and from this original cause, that down to the present day the medical profession in France has continued perversely self-tarnished by a traditional cynical atheism and active hatred to Christianity; albeit of course revolutionary fanaticism having supplanted Huguenot fervour, is immediately responsible for this. The doctors, right or wrong, had become unpopular at Court, had continued objects of derision to the proud *noblesse* of Versailles, and retaliated with a hatred subsequently fanned to a most rancorous flame by the no less godless than republican theories of the Encyclopedists. . . .

And really, in our own student days, have we not all of us been sometimes tempted to exclaim likewise, when studying medicine theoretically in text-books: This learned and celebrated author gives us most minute information respecting such and such a disease, its origin, varieties, diagnostic symptoms and so forth; but when it comes to *treatment*, how little does he condescend to tell us! Out of six or eight pages on the whole subject, we

find perhaps ten or twelve lines as to treatment. What a poor little halfpenny-worth of bread to a monstrous quantity of sack!

It naturally ensues, where so important a subject as treatment is so cavalierly treated itself, that its equally important component-corollary, *diet*, must be no less maltreated. . . . Indeed many highly-prized text-books of a past generation coolly ignore this trivial detail altogether; even as great generals in old times deemed it *infra dig.* to bother their heads about a prosaic commissariat, and left their army to *diet* itself, very liberally no doubt when feasible, but to dire discomfort of the civil community, friend no less than foe.

Matters are better managed nowadays in the province of the pen no less than in that of the sword. *Hygiene* now ranks side by side with treatment, nay, forms part and parcel of the same, and seems only too prone at intervals to assume over-prominence. *Diet* obviously claims Hygiene's consideration to the highest degree, and it thence follows that in the pages of modern medical authors, it finds far more attention devoted to it than has been the general rule in the past. . . . But in the sick-room itself it has from time immemorial been an all-absorbing question. . . . "What can the patient fancy to eat now?" seems an almost instinctive primary question on the lips of his anxious friends, especially in the incipient stages of illness. . . . There appears a sort of amiable superstition abroad that "something nice" would do the sufferer good somehow. . . . Of course once the physician has been called in to take the case in hand, his injunctions on the subject are paramount. . . . Yet how often is he not misled by patient, nurses, and friends in coalition? This is less likely to occur in these days of trained nurses with a more enlightened view of their duties, provided they do not assume to know too much.

But in justice to the medical author, it must be ever borne in mind, *there can be no cast-iron rules of treatment and diet*. . . . To blindly treat a dozen sufferers from the same identical malady as laid down in print by the most experienced authority would prove no less fatally disastrous than plunging into a deep stream after learning how to swim theoretically from a manual on that art, with no preliminary practice. . . . In *rheumatism, inter alia*, the subject of this treatise, each individual case has to be tended on its individual merits, in matters of diet no less than of treatment; still certain general principles must be laid down and borne in mind while the practitioner uses his own judgment as to the form, degree, and frequency of their application.

To preserve a healthy digestive permanent function in a rheumatic patient should obviously be a standing rule; and to this end, his diet should be so ordered as to exclude any food from which assimilative difficulties may be apprehended, an exclusion which nevertheless leaves him a pretty extensive bill of fare. Poultry, game, and fish in general, fresh meat—the latter very tender and in strict moderation—are both permissible and nutritious. . . . (We need scarcely add our pen is treating of *chronic*, not acute rheumatism.) Tapioca, rice, and farinaceous foods in general; and amid vegetables: broccoli, lettuces, water-cress, Spanish onions, celery (*stewed*), are especially to be recommended; though indeed all fresh vegetables are admissible. . . . The same with respect to *fruit* in general, provided it be *ripe*. . . . often a desideratum in large cities, where quantity too often supplants quality alike in the market and in public estimation. . . . As a rule *cooked* fruits are preferable to uncooked for the valetudinarian, though not essentially so. As for milk, cream, and butter, they are admissible enough, but should be good and *pure* of their kind.

But while licensing all the above for the rheumatic patient's diet, his physician must bear in mind the caution in the preceding lines as to possible non-assimilation in digestion, whereof a pretty general indication is afforded, when lithates are found, on inspection of the patient's urine, to be deposited therein. It should also be remembered that in many cases *all animal food* is unadvisable, and that a purely vegetarian diet may prove far more conducive to healthy digestive functions.

With respect to *liquids*, without any ostentatious profession of teetotalism, which some practitioners now deem it the fashionable "correct thing" to inculcate, the author deprecates as a rule all fermented alcoholic drinks until recovery. For meals, home-made lemonade will be found a sufficient assuager of thirst, no less so *pure* water in abundance—where attainable, as from a country spring for instance. But the maintenance of *healthy digestion throughout* must be the first and last dietary consideration.

CHAPTER VII.

"NEVROSE" AND ACUPUNCTURE : A SUGGESTION.

It is worthy of the most serious attention that, in different ages of the world, different diseases have predominated ; to become—in some cases—extinct with the period wherein they prevailed. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, the "*Morbus Ardentium*," a gruesome gangrene simply due to the bad agriculture of a distracted, barbarous era, entailed wholesale poisoning through diseased rye. The Crusades rendered *Eastern Leprosy* a home-scurge for generations, contracted often enough no doubt in its origin much in the same unavoidable way as another fashionable pest of the sixteenth century, euphoniously described by Shakespeare as "Malady of France." Not much later our gormandising ancestors had to thank their own intemperate sensuality for a morbid *fin-de-siècle* speciality of their own "*Ye Sweatyng Sycknesse*." . . . The plague was formerly an ever-recurrent terror in Europe, from the earliest times down to the close of the last century. . . . Witness the plague of Marseilles. . . . But the previously named scourge has now dwindled down into influenza, even as the once world-dreaded Black Death, which under Edward III. swept off nine-tenths of the population of London, still occasionally and quietly sneaks into London's East End, under the incognito of Typhus. The close of this now departing present century has its own "*up-to-date*" speciality. . . a general tendency to a morbid nervous hyperæsthesia, to which our continental colleagues have assigned a new title, "*Nevrosis*." Of this we see only too many visible symptoms around us here, in London specially. Hours of labour in every branch of

industry have been shortened, and may very likely be curtailed further still in the future; holidays have been multiplied and so grouped as to permit wider extended respites from mental or muscular tension. Much more facility for mental recreation and physical exercise is now afforded all ranks of society than quite recent generations ever dreamed of . . . and yet we everywhere discern more signs daily of nervous fretfulness and disquiet. . . . "No time for anything!" . . . "Life is too short nowadays!" . . . "High pressure of modern existence!" . . . these are the parrot-cries of the day, unceasingly dinned into our ears. . . . Yet, if we look into them calmly, we will speedily detect their gross exaggeration. If men, as they would fain make us believe, have no time for their normal avocations, they nevertheless seem to find plenty of time for idle loafing . . . the man who devours his dinner in five minutes, hastily regardless of dyspepsia, will sit gossiping and smoking for half an hour after it. . . . We may shrewdly suspect man's pet vice, indolence, to have much influence in the matter. It is essentially the vice of highly civilised, ease-loving communities. . . . Never have Englishmen felt more repugnance for hard work than at the present period. . . . Witness the innumerable *labour-saving* devices, the unceasing attempts to make money by *gambling*, not by *working*. . . . There is, no doubt, one large busy, harassed section of the community, to whom the much-talked-of hurry-scurry and high-pressure of modern life is an oppressive material reality, viz., the journalistic world, owing to the public's inexorable demands for repeated newspaper issues in fierce mutual competition. . . . But while on the one hand an unthinking multitude, ever hysterically craving for the "latest intelligence" from somewhere half a dozen times a day, is only too prone to accept its ideas ready made from what is set before its eyes in print, so on the other the

gentlemen of the Press fall into the weakness of deeming themselves the only really intelligent, reasoning section of humanity. . . . Hence it follows that Press cuckoo-cries about modern life's hurry and pressure become universal catch-words. Is it not inconsistent that the ever hurried man, with no time to get through his business, finds plenty to loll in a chair with a pipe or play at hunchbacks on a bicycle? That while he has no time to spare for social amenities, for domestic affections, he can gossip idiotically for hours with barmaids, who secretly laugh at him while accepting trinkets purchased with the cash he has refused his wife for her own or their children's clothes? Cerebral disintegration is clearly one of this *fin-de-siècle's* morbid symptoms! . . .

But the physician and the careful lay investigator can readily discern in the evident moral *malaise* of the present day the aggregation of millions of diseased individual cerebro-nervous systems. It is patent that during the formidable French Revolution which closed the eighteenth century the whole French people for years suffered *epidemically* from a ferocious homicidal mania. A friend of mine who took an active *militant* part in the suppression of the Paris Commune in 1871, assures me its no less ferocious and sanguinary, though less prolonged outrages were universally ascribed by science to a recrudescence of the above mental epidemic entailed by the anxiety and privations of the famous siege of 1870-71, and to the demoralisation of an excited populace weaned by half-a-year's armed inactivity from habits of peaceful industry without a *sufficient* counter-check of military discipline. . . .

Though happily the present day offers—in this country at least—no such sanguinary apprehensions, yet the modern social restlessness, dissatisfaction, and pessimism is very wide-spread indeed; the workman frets and fumes because he cannot forsake his tools to spend his whole

time in Parliament, extolling that labour he secretly dislikes and despises. . . . The merchant, the professional man deplore their inability to become millionaires or celebrities at a hop, step, and jump. . . . Universal impatience to make a fortune, to retire on a competency at an unreasonably early age, have sadly relaxed public ideas of common honesty in all walks of life. What our honest fathers sternly called "roguery" or "cheating" is now euphoniously termed "the custom of the trade." . . . Another cant phrase in everybody's mouth, "To get on," plainly means: "Make money anyhow: lie, steal, swindle, forge, but *don't* commit the one great sin of being *found out*!" . . . Our good grandmothers would stare with horror at so many modern cases of "*ladies*" (!) detected shoplifting! . . .

A less prominent but no less deadly anti-Christian soul-debasing physical symptom of the day startles alike the physician, the divine, and the moralist. . . . To the wretched *pessimism* which will lead a more healthily minded future generation—(we fervently hope)—to excrete the name and memory of *Schopenhauer* must much modern crime be imputed. Witness the frequent crime of a blameless woman murdered at the hands of an unwelcome lover, who then commits suicide . . . a *thief* to the last as well as a murderer, defrauding even the gallows; the much-vaunted music of Wagner has been pithily described as *diseased* music, the morbid elucubrations of one mad brain for the amusement of another. . . . Truly a fit dirge for our distempered infidel nineteenth century to die to! *Fin-de-siècle* harmony indeed!

Nervous derangement betrays itself in the drama of the day, with its "sexual problem" plays. . . . It is obvious that a morbid state of the cerebro-spinal system must affect the mind's power of discerning right from wrong.

We have just alluded to "kleptomaniac ladies." Would the British matrons and maidens of five-and-twenty years ago have applauded cynical stage-glorification of adultery? Would they have sat out a "problem" play?

Happily there seems cause to hope Ibsenism, Oscar Wilde-ism, and that ilk are now on the wane. . . . It may be feared, though, 'tis not re-aroused healthy public feeling, but a feverish desire for something new. . . .

It is, however, in the spirit of Galen, not of Juvenal, the author pens these reflections. . . . The physician's mission is not that of a satirist, though each aims in his way at benefiting his fellow-men. But the physician's is the more compassionate procedure; he seeks above all to *heal*, not to chide or revile, even for reformatory purposes. In this calm spirit of investigation we may further discern a beneficent symptom of modern nerve-strain defeating its own ends by its intolerant *excès de zèle*. Amid over-zealous social reformers the advocates of temperance are, figuratively speaking, supremely *intemperate* in their frantic denunciations of non-abstainers, in their erroneous assumption that to drunkenness *alone* is all crime traceable. . . . Even so do many others advocate *education* (of the head, *not of the heart*) as a panacea for all crime. . . . Statistics in the United States, where education is universal, disprove both postulates. And in Europe the crimes of *educated* men (forgery, poisoning, etc.) hold a larger proportion to coarser forms of crime than of yore. . . . *Uneducated* anarchists could not have devised murderous explosive engines. . . . It is plain that modern brain-impairment has warped moral perceptions. . . . Disavowal of all social obligations, cynically avowed disbelief in a Deity, disgracing as they do our modern literature, further prove modern neurosis to be supremely epidemic for the nonce.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SAME (*continued*).

SEVERAL material concurrents to neurosis must not be passed over. *Abuse of ardent spirits* claims foremost rank amid these. At periods and in localities where men openly and heartily drink beer or wine *unadulterated* by mischievous modern chemical science, the advocate of total abstention is not wanted. Take, as an instance, France—essentially a land of vineyards, and *formerly* of genial sobriety. . . . Of late years the vice of drunkenness has made fearful strides—amid its urban population at least. The factory-hand has a vicious preference for ardent spirits, no doubt because he instinctively courts their tendency to infuriate him blindly against the employer on whose wages he lives; and this vice is further fostered by the deplorable tendency of modern mankind to herd together in huge industrial towns, debarred from the fresh air, the athletic exertions, the soothing yet bracing surroundings of rural life, with its occasional amicable intercourse between high and low, between rich and poor, which vanishes in the towns with its squalid, commonplace, ugly surroundings of slum-alley, canal-wharf, coal or factory-yard, etc., etc. [*Nota Bene*: A prominent early symptom of Rome's downfall was the abnormal flocking of her yeomanry into the towns.]

All French scientists concur in ascribing to the baleful spirit *absinthe* a fearful increase of late years in violent crimes and development of *homicidal* mania. In many countries hypocrisy leads women especially to outwardly feign rigorous teetotalism, while secretly practising the most loathsome form of intoxicating dram-drinking. . . . *Æther*, absorbed by the mouth or injected hypoder-

mically, and *chloral*, are more deadly than any form of alcoholic drinks. . . .

A more harmless, yet none the less vexatious, symptom of modern "*Névrose*" displays itself in the silly touchiness evinced between neighbours respecting many unavoidable noises, also as to the barking of dogs, singing of birds, etc. One idiot actually essayed a few years ago to prosecute in a police-court a lady neighbour guilty of receiving too many visitors, and thereby entailing too much knocking or ringing, too much carriage noise at her door, etc. Needless to add legal process was laughingly denied him by the authorities. The ridiculous often intrudes on the tragical, and assuredly an Englishman suffering from *hysterics* is of all ridiculous animated beings at once the most ludicrous and the most contemptible. . . . Our stalwart fathers would have pronounced this sexless creature an impossibility. . . . But *they* were sturdily innocent of "*Névrose*," with its timid men afraid of riding outside an omnibus even in *dry* cold weather, while their wives and sisters "*bike*" past them in breeches! . . .

But dissertation on a malady is sheer waste of time where the physician can suggest no remedy. Of course, for this *fin-de-siècle* disease, *fin-de-siècle* remedies seem apposite; so electricity, hypnotism, and so forth have been widely brought into play, in France especially, the baptiser of "*Névrose*." Of course, also, where widely different systems of treatment are resorted to, patients and doctors unite in taking up different sides, according to the success which has attended their own favoured treatment within their own experience. It is most logical to assume that, even as there is no royal road to learning, so there is no hard-and-fast unswerving rule of treatment for any complaint. We all concur in viewing nervous disturbance as essentially Protean in its endless varieties of aspect: that

what succeeds in one case fails in another, and that a liberal, unbiassed eclecticism is the wise physician's best rule to adopt. . . .

It is, however, but natural and logical that he should hold his own general therapeutic preferences, based on his own general experience in his own practice; and in due sequence thereof the author pleads for a fair scope of trial being given his own. . . . The soldier ever upholds a preference for the weapon carried by his own special corps, be it rifle, sabre, or lance; and he may justly do so after repeated victories. . . . That the *Percusso-punctator* can, does, and has already proved of signal service in treating these neurotic disorders, its inventor strenuously maintains while inviting thereto the professional attention of all his medical readers. . . . He seeks not, however, to dogmatise; . . . emulation, "where doctors disagree," is salutary in the long run. A desert is made up of pebbles and grains of sand; an ocean of drops of water; and while Legion is the name of the clinical minutiae combining to constitute rheumatoid and nervine affections, our utmost interest and profound research is all the more forcibly invited thereby. Each individual patient relieved from pain, each nervous system braced up again, is a step forward in the advance of humanity—imperceptible, no doubt—but so is the progress of many an ancient clock's short hand, which has for a century indicated the progress of its hours.

To claim the modest part of individual concurrence in relieving suffering mankind, and taking his share of professional emulation in such a cause, is the author's highest aspiration.

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